## **EXHIBIT 7**

## Transcript of Hearing on Motion to Amend Coordination Order

**April 19, 2024** 

(E.D. Va.)

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1
                     UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
                     EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA
 2
                          ALEXANDRIA DIVISION
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        -----x
    UNITED STATES, et al., : Civil Action No.: 1:23-cv-108
 4
                   Plaintiffs, :
 5
          versus
                               : Friday, April 19, 2024: Alexandria, Virginia: Pages 1-23
 6
     GOOGLE LLC,
 7
                   Defendant.
 8
             The above-entitled motions hearing was heard before
     the Honorable John F. Anderson, United States Magistrate
 9
     Judge.
10
                        APPEARANCES:
11
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15
                           AARON TEITELBAUM, ESQUIRE
                           MICHAEL WOLIN, ESQUIRE
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                        PROCEEDINGS
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               THE DEPUTY CLERK: United States, et al. versus
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     Google LLC, Civil Action Number 23-cv-108.
 4
              MR. MENE: Good morning, Your Honor. Gerard Mene
 5
    with the U.S. Attorney's Office.
 6
               MS. WOOD: Good morning, Your Honor. Julia Wood
 7
     for the Department of Justice for the plaintiffs. My
 8
     colleague, Michael Wolin, will be arguing today.
 9
               THE COURT:
                          Okay.
10
              MR. WOLIN: Good morning, Your Honor.
11
    Michael Wolin from the Department of Justice.
12
               THE COURT:
                          Thank you.
13
              MR. TEITELBAUM: Good morning, Your Honor. Aaron
14
     Teitelbaum, also from the Department of Justice.
15
               THE COURT: Thank you.
16
              MR. HENRY: Good morning, Your Honor. Ty Henry
17
     from the Virginia Attorney General's Office on behalf of the
    plaintiff states.
18
19
               THE COURT: Thank you.
              MR. JUSTUS: Good morning, Your Honor.
20
21
    Bradley Justus for Google. I have my colleagues, Kenina Lee
22
     and Caroline Boisvert, and then Craig Reilly, our local
2.3
     counsel.
24
               THE COURT: Okay. Who's going to argue for?
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               MR. JUSTUS: I will.
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1 Okay. Thank you. Well, I've read the THE COURT: 2 papers that the parties submitted, so I'll hear any 3 arguments that you want to make. 4 Thank you. Thank you, Your Honor. 5 MR. WOLIN: 6 The focus of plaintiffs' motion is one question, 7 should the Texas case against Google be treated differently 8 than the MDL case against Google, and we believe the answer 9 is no, it should be treated the same. 10 THE COURT: Let me just make sure I understand the 11 facts. When Texas was part -- well, let me step back. 12 The case that got transferred from Texas to the 13 MDL and then from the MDL back to Texas, was the case that 14 was transferred to the MDL the entire action that was 15 pending in Texas, or were there other parties in the Texas 16 action that continued with a case in Texas and then were 17 rejoined by the attorney general of Texas and the others? 18 MR. WOLIN: No, Your Honor. The entire case that Texas's co-plaintiffs filed against Google was transferred 19 20 to the MDL and then subsequently remanded to Texas. 21 THE COURT: And when the coordination order was 22 negotiated in the MDL and in this court, at that time, the 23 Texas -- the request to transfer the case back to Texas was 24 pending, so the parties knew that that was something that 25 was on the horizon or could happen; is that right?

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               MR. WOLIN: Yes, that's correct, Your Honor.
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    parties anticipated that any case that was in the MDL could
 3
    be remanded to its home district, either during discovery or
 4
     after discovery was over, which was the reason that the
 5
     coordination order allowed for that. But, in this instance,
 6
    it's important.
 7
               THE COURT: Well, it specifically says that if
 8
     it's transferred, that the party will be a non-party.
 9
     once it gets transferred, that party whose case gets
10
     transferred is considered to be a non-party.
11
               MR. WOLIN: It says, Your Honor, that if any case
12
     gets transferred out of the MDL, the parties will meet and
     confer and determine at that time, based on where each case
13
14
     is in its timeline, what additional coordination is
15
    necessary or proper. And we believe in this instance,
16
     because Texas was transferred while there was still
17
     discovery outstanding in Texas, that it was important.
18
               THE COURT: Well, that's -- let's look at the
19
     order. Do you have it in front of you?
20
               MR. WOLIN: Yes. Of course, Your Honor.
21
               THE COURT: Okay. Well, it talks about some
22
     discussions, but it also says that the transferred case,
23
     they will be treated as a non-party; doesn't it?
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               MR. WOLIN: Yes. That's correct, Your Honor.
25
               THE COURT: Okay. So unless and until something
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1
    happens, they're a non-party.
 2
               MR. WOLIN:
                           That's correct, Your Honor.
 3
     that's why we're here today because the coordination order
 4
     suggested that the parties meet and confer and determine
 5
     what coordination would be appropriate, and we believe that
 6
     further coordination is appropriate, given that discovery is
 7
     continuing in Texas and depositions are going to be taken,
 8
     including depositions of witnesses that are listed on the
 9
     parties' initial disclosures in this case.
10
               And in that instance, we think that continuing the
     coordination order is appropriate, specifically because it
11
12
     allowed for the plaintiffs in this case to obtain deposition
13
     transcripts for witnesses that were deposed in other cases
14
     after discovery closed in this case. And that was part of
15
     the benefit that we bargained for, and we think that it's
16
     appropriate to order that given that and all the other
17
     reasons that we put forward for why coordination makes
18
     sense.
19
               THE COURT: Well, your brief says that the
20
     New York court has not -- that the approval of the New York
21
     court has not occurred to date.
22
               MR. WOLIN: Yes. That's correct, Your Honor.
23
               THE COURT: It was denied; right?
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               MR. WOLIN: It was denied.
25
               THE COURT: Well, help me understand how you can
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1 tell me in your opening brief that it has not occurred to 2 date, when, in fact, it has been requested and denied. 3 MR. WOLIN: Well, I mean, it hadn't occurred at 4 the time that we filed it. It's always open to reurging by 5 the parties in the MDL. The coordination order in the MDL 6 was jointly proposed by Google and the MDL plaintiffs. 7 Judge Castel decided not to implement it; he had his 8 reasons. But, respectfully, that's not the situation that 9 10 we have in our case. Discovery is still open in the MDL, 11 and Judge Castel's order was premised on the idea that it 12 might slow down discovery here -- in that case. But, here, 13 discovery is closed; it's not going to slow anything down. 14 We're just asking to be able to obtain the deposition 15 transcripts and documents that Google obtains in Texas 16 without any burden on Texas itself. 17 We specifically set up the coordination order so 18 there would be no burden. We can order the deposition 19 transcripts directly from the court reporters. Google is 20 not involved in that at all. They don't have to produce any 21 documents to us. It's their choice. If they want to 22 produce documents that they obtain in Texas and thereby get 23 the right to use those in our case, it's their option; 24 they're not forced to do it. And we think this is an 25 important issue particularly because --

THE COURT: Well, if it's an important issue and the case was transferred to Texas November 1 and you're bringing this to the Court at the end of April, why do you wait five months to do that if it's so important an issue for you?

MR. WOLIN: Of course, Your Honor.

The process of transferring the case to Texas was very long and drawn out; it had to go through the JPML, as well as the Second Circuit. And then once the case was transferred to Texas, the parties in the Texas litigation began negotiating their own coordination order, which we discussed in our brief, which would have provided us access to deposition transcripts from that case, which was the main objective, the main bargain that we had wanted out of the coordination order. And when it looked like that wasn't occurring, we realized that really the better path would be to just fully extend the coordination order to the Texas case again as it was when the coordination order was eventually -- or was first implemented. And we met and conferred with Google, and now we're before Your Honor.

We observed in the Texas litigation that the judge there seemed open to coordination with this case. He had ordered that the deposition transcripts from the Texas case could be shared with us, and then when the coordination order didn't come into effect because of Judge Castel, he

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     said again from the bench that he would be welcoming
 2
     coordination between the cases, and he would be there
 3
     willing to help if it was needed by the parties.
 4
               THE COURT: Well, help me understand. If I was
 5
     inclined to grant your request, is that a back door getting
 6
     around what Judge Castel has already done? Since the MDL
 7
     parties have access to the discovery in this case, wouldn't
 8
     I be somehow or another undoing what he had already decided,
     which you say in your brief it hasn't occurred to date when
 9
10
     it had actually been decided?
11
               And that is -- that is troublesome that you would
12
     write a brief and present it to the Court in a matter that
13
    has been presented to a district judge in the MDL and
14
     decided and tell me that it has not -- that nothing has
15
     occurred to date.
16
               MR. WOLIN: We apologize for that, Your Honor.
17
     thought we were clear.
18
               But to get to Your Honor's question, we don't
19
     think it's a back door way around Judge Castel's opinion on
20
     not allowing further coordination between the MDL and the
21
     Texas case.
22
               Judge Castel already implemented coordination with
     this case and the --
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24
               THE COURT: But if you get discovery in this case,
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     it's coordinated with the MDL case; right?
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MR. WOLIN: Castel ruled about coordination of
depositions that still were taking place between the MDL and
the Texas case, but that's not the -- we don't have any
ability to share the depositions that we obtained from Texas
if the order is implemented with the MDL. The coordination
order covers discovery obtained in this case -- the existing
coordination with the MDL covers the discovery that we
obtained in this case; it doesn't necessarily cover the --
anything that we would get for impeachment purposes.
          THE COURT: But documents you get in this case you
share with the MDL; right?
         MR. WOLIN: It would give -- I mean, the
coordination order now does give us the ability to share
discovery, correct.
          THE COURT: Right. And deposition transcripts are
discovery.
          MR. WOLIN: Yes, Your Honor.
          THE COURT: A product of discovery.
          So wouldn't -- if, in fact, you know, you were
getting deposition transcripts from the 80-or-so depositions
that are going on in Texas -- which is much different than
when this was negotiated. There was a set number of
depositions that were going to be taken in the MDL and in
our case, now Texas apparently has decided you can take up
to 80 depositions or something, so it's a much different
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     animal now. But if you get a deposition transcript through
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     a coordination order in our case, doesn't that give the MDL
 3
    proceeding access to that since it's discovery in this case?
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               MR. WOLIN:
                           I don't think that's necessarily
 5
               The Texas protective order may prevent that,
 6
    but --
 7
               THE COURT: Well, the -- I don't know the Texas
 8
    protective order. I don't know whether it allows you to get
 9
     it here; so ...
10
                           I mean, the Texas protective order
               MR. WOLIN:
11
     requires that discovery from the Texas case only be used in
12
     that case, which is why a coordination order with that case
13
     would be required to use some of the discovery here.
14
               But Judge Castel didn't seem to be worried about
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     sharing of the -- under the coordination order even if it
16
     applied to the Texas case. He was most concerned with not
17
     slowing down the depositions that were occurring in the MDL.
18
               THE COURT: And when are they going to be done,
19
     the depositions in the MDL?
20
               MR. WOLIN: June 28th.
21
               THE COURT: And when's the Texas?
22
               MR. WOLIN: May 3rd, Your Honor.
23
               THE COURT: May 3rd?
2.4
               MR. WOLIN: Yes.
25
                           Okay. And how many depositions are
               THE COURT:
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     they allowing in the Texas case?
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                           In the Texas case, they're allowed 40
               MR. WOLIN:
 3
    per side.
 4
               THE COURT: When you negotiated this order --
 5
     coordination order, at that point in time, how many
 6
     depositions were the parties allowed to take?
 7
               MR. WOLIN: In this case, the parties were allowed
 8
     10 party depositions and 20 third-party depositions. In the
 9
     MDL case, Judge Castel put an initial limit of 15
10
     depositions per side, but was open. As I think he said in
11
    his discovery order, he would be open to extending that for
12
     a showing of good cause.
13
               But, Your Honor, nothing in the coordination order
14
     and the negotiations that went into it were premised on the
15
    number of depositions. It doesn't say in the coordination
16
     order that it only applies if the number of depositions are
17
     roughly equivalent, or it would not apply if Judge Castel
     ordered more depositions.
18
19
               The number of depositions is really not the most
20
     important factor here. The factor here is the fact that
21
     Google is out there taking these depositions. And Google
22
     has an equal number of depositions in Texas as the Texas
23
    plaintiffs do, so there's no unfairness there. But the
24
    unfairness to us here is because Google is out there taking
25
     these depositions of parties that are listed on our initial
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     disclosures that may have been deposed in our case, and
 2
     there's really an unavoidable risk to Google's counsel, who
 3
     are the same counsel in this case. Two of the same law
 4
     firms and several of the same individual lawyers appeared in
 5
     both cases. The harm to us is that they will be out there
 6
     taking depositions of these witnesses and then making
 7
     decisions about whether to call those witnesses and how they
     examine them at trial in our trial here in this courthouse.
 8
 9
               And even if they do their best to not share
10
     information between the cases -- which wouldn't be
11
     allowed -- it's just human nature that it's inevitable that
12
     they will unconsciously make decisions based on information.
13
     They can't unknow something that they learned in the Texas
14
     case from the depositions they're taking there when they're
15
     making the decisions about what witnesses to call here and
16
     how to cross-examine witnesses that we may call.
17
               Thank you, Your Honor.
18
               THE COURT:
                          Okay.
19
               MR. WOLIN: Do you have questions?
20
               THE COURT: No. Thank you.
21
               MR. WOLIN:
                           Thank you.
22
               MR. JUSTUS: Thank you, Your Honor.
2.3
               THE COURT: Go ahead.
2.4
               MR. JUSTUS: Thank you, Your Honor.
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               This circumstance of Texas being remanded to a
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separate proceeding was considered when the coordination
order was entered, and Texas was explicitly carved out of
this coordination order in the event of remand for the
obvious reason that the circumstances may be very different
when and if the case got remanded. And now we're in those
different circumstances.
          This case has had discovery closed for seven
months. Summary judgment is due next Friday. We're going
to trial later this year, and Texas has -- the Texas case
allows a number of depositions in this case that is far in
excess of those that have -- the Texas case allows a number
of depositions in that case that is far in excess of the
number of depositions that were allowed in this case.
          If this coordination order modification were
granted, more depositions would come back into this case
than were initially taken in this case.
          THE COURT: They would only come back in this case
for the purposes of impeachment; is that right?
          MR. JUSTUS: Yes, Your Honor. They would come
back in for the purposes of impeachment.
          But the problem is is what sort of asymmetry does
              The DOJ, I think, more or less concedes in
that create?
their reply brief that if this modification is granted, they
will discuss the Virginia discovery materials with Texas.
          THE COURT: Well, they had a right to discuss it
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1
     with Texas up until the case got transferred.
 2
               MR. JUSTUS: Absolutely. The problem is is that
 3
     they can discuss it with Texas, suggest lines of questioning
 4
     for these Texas depositions of Google employees, they will
 5
     bring those depos back into this Virginia case for either
 6
     impeachment, and also maybe even more importantly, to guide
 7
     their trial strategy. And this is after the government has
 8
     had three years of pre-suit investigation, numerous depos
 9
     here. It really works a huge asymmetry. And, again, this
10
     case is buttoned up and getting ready for trial. This isn't
11
     the time to bring back in all this new paper.
12
               THE COURT: How many depositions have been taken
13
     in the Texas case?
14
               MR. JUSTUS: So, to date -- it's a small number.
15
     I think -- I think it's less than ten; however, over the
16
     next three weeks of discovery, and possibly for a limited
17
     extension of discovery, there are multiple depos happening
18
     every day.
19
               THE COURT: And what --
20
               MR. JUSTUS: Almost every day, I think.
21
                           Tell me a little bit more about the
               THE COURT:
22
     issue that was presented to Judge Castel and his decision on
23
     that front in the -- I guess the decision not to coordinate
24
    between Texas and the MDL proceeding.
25
                                   So I think that the parties
               MR. JUSTUS: Yeah.
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     presented to Judge Castel the possibility of entering this
 2
     coordination order between the current MDL and Texas.
 3
     Judge Castel denied it, saying that the MDL case is getting
     towards the end of discovery, and now is not the time to
 4
 5
    bring in new deposition coordination into that case,
 6
     recognizing discovery is almost over.
 7
               In a lot of ways, Your Honor, I think Judge Castel
 8
    had more reason to grant this than this Court does, because
 9
     if Judge Castel had granted this, there was some efficiency
10
     in that certain Google deponents wouldn't have had to sit
11
     twice, certain third-parties wouldn't have had to sit twice.
12
     If this Court granted that relief, even that benefit would
13
    not be there, as Your Honor pointed out.
14
               There would also be this weird result where
15
     there's all this material flowing back into the MDL in
16
     contravention of Judge Castel's order through kind of a back
17
     door amendment.
18
               THE COURT: All right. I think I understand your
19
     argument.
20
               I'll hear anything else from the plaintiffs.
21
               MR. WOLIN: Yes, Your Honor. I want to start with
     just a few points, Your Honor.
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23
               First, counsel from Google talked about the
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     ability of -- or the potential that the United States or the
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     plaintiffs in this case would coordinate directly with
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counsel for Texas to discuss questions or something along
those lines. And those were pointed out in our paper.
They're their own litigants, they're doing their own
strategy.
          But what's more important, I think, is Google that
has the same attorneys who are representing it in both cases
and are doing that type of coordination already. They have
sent subpoenas to many third parties out of the Texas
litigation, including the federal agencies who provided
documents in this case, which -- and asking to renotice
discovery from this case in the Texas case, which shows that
they're already crafting their discovery strategy in the
Texas case based on information from this case. So that
type of coordination or strategizing was already occurring.
          And the second thing I want to just go back to is
the provision in the coordination order about what would
happen if a case was remanded. The -- at the time the
parties were negotiating the coordination order, they
understood that, at some point, cases from the MDL would be
remanded to their home districts for trial or additional
proceedings, and the parties negotiated and agreed to the
language that they would -- if that occurred, they would
continue to meet and confer about whether and how
coordination would occur.
          THE COURT: Well, but -- there is that language,
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    but there's also two specific instances in the coordination
     order in paragraph bb -- 1bb: "For the avoidance of doubt,
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     unless and until a further order directs otherwise, an
 4
     individual or entity ceases to be a party" -- that is party
 5
     under the terms of this agreement -- "if all claims that it
 6
     asserts or have been asserted against it in the MDL of the
 7
     Virginia case have been dismissed or otherwise adjudicated
 8
     by a district court or transferred to a court other than one
 9
     of the district courts."
10
               MR. WOLIN: Yes.
11
               THE COURT: And then it says in paragraph 9:
12
     all claims brought by an MDL plaintiff are dismissed,
13
     transferred or remanded, then the MDL plaintiff shall be
14
     treated as a non-party for the purposes of this order after
15
     such dismissal, transfer or remand."
16
               MR. WOLIN: Yes, Your Honor. And that's why we're
17
    before Your Honor today.
18
               But what is important is that when we were
19
    negotiating it, we contemplated that a remand after
20
     discovery had been completed in the MDL and there would be
21
    no more discovery in the home district, it would be very
22
     different than a remand in this circumstance where Texas was
    remanded with additional --
23
24
               THE COURT: Where does it say that in this?
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     know, Texas was fighting long and hard to get this case out
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     of the MDL at the time this was being negotiated, you knew
 2
     that. That isn't what you say here.
 3
               MR. WOLIN: Well, Your Honor, the order says what
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     it says, and it says that there would be further discussion
 5
     about whether and how there would be additional
 6
     coordination, which contemplates that there could be an
 7
     additional order, which is why we're here today seeking that
 8
     additional order, because for all of the reasons that it
 9
    made sense to order coordination when Texas was part of the
10
     MDL, it still makes sense to order coordination with the
11
     Texas case now that it's separate from the MDL.
12
               THE COURT: All right.
13
               MR. WOLIN: Just one final point, Your Honor.
14
               At the time the coordination order was entered,
     remand was with the Second Circuit. Google was opposing it
15
16
     at that point. So it was not at all clear that there would
17
     actually be a remand of the Texas case to its home
18
     jurisdiction.
19
               THE COURT: And again, explain to me why you're
20
    bringing this to me in April when the remand became
21
     effective in November.
22
               MR. WOLIN: As I explained, Your Honor, the --
    after the remand became effective, the Texas -- Texas and
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24
     Google proposed coordination orders to the Court there,
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     which would have provided the Virginia plaintiffs with the
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same benefits that they were seeking here. We thought if
     that was sufficient to meet -- to create the level playing
     field that we were hoping for at trial that we wouldn't have
     to burden the Court, but it seems like that's not happening.
    And it's not happening for any reason -- it's happening
    because Judge Castel didn't want to coordinate his case with
     the Texas case -- with the MDL with the Texas case. It had
     nothing to do with the provision that the Virginia
     plaintiffs would be able to obtain deposition transcripts
10
     from the Texas case.
11
               I mean, Judge Jordan in Texas agreed with that and
12
     ordered it. But to effectuate that, because Judge Castel
13
     didn't enter the order, we needed to come here, which is
14
     what we're doing and what was contemplated in the
15
     coordination order originally, that we would seek additional
16
     relief if it was justified when a remand occurred.
17
               THE COURT: All right. Thank you.
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               MR. WOLIN: Thank you, Your Honor.
               THE COURT: Well, I've reviewed the materials that
20
     the parties submitted, I've heard the argument that's been
    presented here today. At this point, I don't think that the
22
    motion should be granted.
23
               First of all, you know, this coordination order
24
     was negotiated through a long and difficult process, and the
25
     parties agreed to certain provisions at that time. And at
                                                               20
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that time, the case was the MDL case and the Virginia case,
and the discovery was set as to what was going to be
happening in the MDL case and what was going to be happening
in the Virginia case.
          The parties, you know, made an agreement at that
point in time, and the agreement is specific, where it says
that if a case gets transferred or remanded -- and this
is -- you know, everybody knew it was -- potentially it was
going to happen, that that was -- the result of that was
that the parties in that remanded case are going to be
non-parties. It's that clear.
          It does say that, you know, you can come back and
and talk about what -- regarding whether and on what
conditions the transferred cases should be coordinated with
the MDL in Virginia cases, but it doesn't say they will be.
          Again, I'm not sure why, when this issue came up
in November, we're now dealing with it in April on the eve
of filing summary judgment motions and motions in limine and
four months before the trial in this case.
          I'm also concerned, to be honest with you -- you
know, the Texas case is a much different case now that it's
in Texas than it was in the MDL. Obviously there are
issues, and, as Google has pointed out, there are some other
claims that weren't being involved in the MDL case, the --
that are now part of the Texas case. A bigger case, a lot
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    more depositions involved, a completely different set of
 2
     circumstances. And I'm concerned that the MDL Court has
 3
     denied a similar request. And we are coordinating with the
 4
     MDL Court, and for our Court to take a different position
 5
     than the MDL Court, whether it could be used as a back door
 6
     for the MDL plaintiffs or not, I think is an open issue.
 7
     don't think it's as clear as the plaintiffs in this case
 8
     indicate, that if you're getting information through a
     coordination of discovery -- and it is discovery -- that
 9
10
     there may be the opportunity to share that information with
11
     the MDL plaintiffs would again be backdooring Judge Castel's
12
     denial of a request, not just a he-hasn't-acted-on-it kind
13
     of a request.
14
               So, for all these reasons, I deny the motion at
15
     this time.
16
               Anything else from the parties today?
17
               MR. JUSTUS: No, Your Honor.
18
               THE COURT: Okay. Anything else?
19
               MS. WOOD: Your Honor, I just want to make one
20
     clarification for the record.
21
               The day the MDL -- the Texas case was remanded, I
22
     sent an email personally to counsel for Google to begin the
23
     coordination process for the coordination. I just don't
24
     want the Court left with the misimpression that we didn't
25
     act promptly.
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               THE COURT: And as you know, you can file a motion
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     on a Friday and get it heard the following Friday.
 3
              MS. WOOD: Understood, Your Honor. We --
 4
               THE COURT: That's exactly what you did in this
 5
     case, and you filed that motion a week ago today.
 6
              MS. WOOD: Yes, Your Honor. We foolishly thought
 7
     that we could negotiate something with Google.
               THE COURT: Okay. All right. Okay. Anything
 8
 9
     else?
10
              Court will be adjourned.
11
                       (Proceedings adjourned.)
12
13
     I certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate, to the
14
     best of my ability, transcription of proceedings recorded by
     electronic sound recording (FTR system).
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                                   Stephanie austin
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                                  Stephanie M. Austin, RPR, CRR
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